

REMARKS

Claims 2-14 are pending in the present application. Claim 14 has been amended to further specify that the process utilizes an extruder in conjunction with a rotating support. Support for Claim 14, as amended, can be found for example, at page 3, first full paragraph, and page 4, third full paragraph of the specification. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, entry of the present Amendment is requested.

Claims 2-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 for failing to comply with the written description requirement.

Questions of compliance with the “written description” requirement of § 112, first paragraph, may arise when a claim is amended. Then, it is appropriate to ask whether Applicant, in his original application as filed, described the subject matter now being claimed as his invention.

The process according to the present Application utilizes an extruder in conjunction with a rotating support. Specifically, the uncured band-shaped rubber composition is extruded through an extruder, and, at the same time, the extruded rubber composition is spirally wound onto the rotating support. Independent Claim 14 has been amended to reflect this aspect of the process. Support for Claim 14, as amended, can be found in original Claim 1 and at pages 2 and 3 of the specification.

In view of the above, the present claims comply with the written description requirement of 35 U.S.C. §112. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 2-14 are rejected under 35.U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite.

The test for definiteness under §112, second paragraph, is whether the claim language reasonably apprises persons skilled in the art of the metes and bounds of the claimed subject matter.

The Examiner states that clarification is required of exactly what method steps are being performed and how any such clarification is consistent with the original disclosure which stressed extrusion, "core shaping" and spiral winding. To address the Examiner's concern, Claim 14 has been amended to recite that the belt layer is formed "by extruding an uncured band-shaped coating rubber through an extruder, and, in conjunction with the extrusion, spirally winding the extruded coating rubber onto a rotating support."

Further, the expression "tire shaping," as recited in Claim 14 is known by those skilled in the art to mean the formation of the green tire to be vulcanized. The expression "core shaping" is not employed in the current claims and therefore the Examiner's concern regarding this expression is moot.

In view of the above, the Examiner is kindly requested to withdraw the § 112, second paragraph, indefiniteness rejection.

In Paragraph No. 4 of Action, Claims 6-8 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over GB 1,487,426 to Bekaert taken in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,394,919 to Sandstrom et al. or U.S. Patent No. 4,239,663 to Ravagnani and optionally further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,722,977 to Fischer.

In Paragraph No. 5 of the Action, Claims 2-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Bekaert et al. in view of EP 481080 to Nakagawa et al. and optionally further in view of Fischer and (for Claims 2 and 9-13 only) optionally further in view

of at least one of [U.S. Patent No. 4,615,369 to Sharma and U.S. Patent No. 5,871,597 to Vasseur].

In Paragraph No. 6 of the Action, Claims 3-8 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Bekaert taken in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0,221,760 to Grimberg et al. or U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0,088,522 to Uchino et al. and optionally further in view of Fischer.

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

The rejections should be withdrawn because the cited references do not disclose or render obvious the method of producing a pneumatic tire of the present invention.

As recited in independent Claim 14, the present invention relates to a method of producing a pneumatic tire. This method includes forming a belt on a rotating support by the specific method recited in Claim 14.

In the present invention, the small band-width band-shaped body constituting the belt is formed just before the tire shaping. Further, the rubber composition for the coating rubber in the belt layer is limited to the specifically recited compounding and proportion for improving the extrusion workability.

In order to arrange the belt between the tread and the radial carcass, the belt member has hitherto been manually affixed on the radial carcass member for the green tire.

In contrast, as described on page 4 of the specification and recited in Claim 14, according to the present invention, the belt member is formed on a rotating support by one of the claimed methods (1), (2), or (3) through a core shaping means that does not require manual labor, so that the workability for the formation of the belt can be considerably improved as compared with conventional techniques.

An advantage of the present invention lies in that the rubber composition for the coating rubber in the belt layer to be extruded has the specifically recited compounding and properties and is applied to one of the above methods.

To make up for the deficiencies of the prior art, the Examiner relies on Fischer. Fischer discloses a process and composition for viscosity degradation of diene rubbers. Specifically, in column 1, lines 7-26, Fischer generally states that in the manufacture of vulcanized rubber products, diene rubbers, especially natural rubber, has to be reduced in molecular weight to make it amenable to accept the compounding ingredients necessary to improve the properties of the final product.

Fischer specifically discloses that the mastication efficacy of certain peptisers is further improved by the incorporation of certain chemicals which will act as cocatalysts or boosters along with the peptisers, thereby making the mastication process more economical and more energy efficient.

However, neither Fischer nor the other cited references disclose or fairly suggest the presently recited compounding and properties and belt layer formation as set forth in the present claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is requested.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

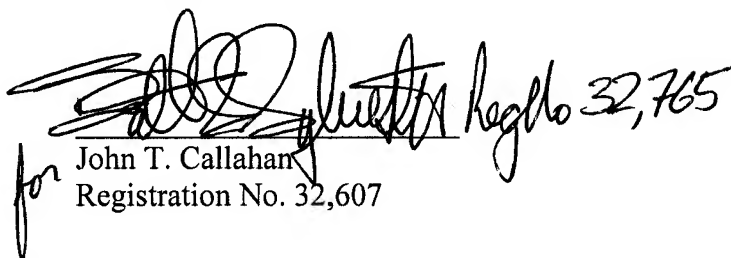
Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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CUSTOMER NUMBER


for John T. Callahan
Registration No. 32,607

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